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On the PROGRESS of OFFICIAL STATISTICS in the NETHERLANDS (1858-63);—with a NEW DUTCH LIFE TABLE by DR. VON BAUMHAUER; contributed by FREDERICK HENDRIKS, F.S.S.

[Read before the Statistical Society, 17th November, 1863.]

IN the Continental States, as indeed in England, various views are taken of the comparative advantage, or the contrary, of centralization in official statistics. With some, centralization under a single commissioner or commission, is most in vogue; to others, it seems preferable to allot to each ministry or government a separate statistical office, allowing the departments to report in their own way, without requiring one general model for the returns, or a reference to one common statistical centre or general commission.

The Netherlands at first adopted the centralized system. This has, however, been suspended by the departmental system. The late Professor Van Ackersdyck, the eminent jurist and statistician who represented the Netherlands at the London meeting (1861) of the International Statistical Congress, and who is recollected by many of us as one of the most earnest and painstaking members at that meeting, may be said to have been the introducer into the Netherlands of the centralized statistical system. The central commission was instituted 5th November, 1858. It held monthly meetings from March, 1859, to December, 1861. Van Ackersdyck was its president during 1859 and 1860, and on his resignation in December, 1860, a successor to the cares of his difficult task was sought for without success, and the departmental system was resorted to. The central commission printed two reports, one of an official character, containing a statistical review for the years 1859 and 1860, and the other a review printed at the expense of the members—of their labours during 1861, at the close of which year, the second Chamber of the States General threw out the budget of the commission for 1862. It is very likely that the budget, or estimate of expense, of such centralized commissions will, in several countries, as it has been in the Netherlands, be found the main cause of their dissolution. On the other hand, in the departmental system, the expense, divided amongst several sections of the administration, although greater in the aggregate, is less patent, less subject to the attacks of over zealous financial reformers, and thus has less chance of adverse criticism.

Dr. von Baumhauer* attaches great importance to the labours of private individuals in elaborating and scientifically criticizing the official returns. Functions such as these, frequently exercised by members of the Statistical Society of London, are in Holland taken up by a corporation of about one hundred members, which has its place of meeting and its library at Amsterdam. Its direction consists of seven members, and there are several general meetings each year. The statutes of this corporation were approved by royal decree, 4th July, 1862. Such transactions or papers as are intended for the public eye, appear in the pages of the "Political and Economical Annual," published since 1849, at Amsterdam, under the chief editorship of the eminent Professor De Bosch Kemper.

In the Dutch East Indies it is intended to establish statistical departments. The Governor-General, Baron Sloet van de Beele, is known as a statistician, having published an esteemed work on the statistics of Guelderland. Two Dutch functionaries, one of whom was chief of the provincial bureau of statistics in Guelderland, were to have gone out to these colonies last month.

Dr. von Baumhauer has furnished us with a notice of the statistical works published by the departments of the Netherlands Government during the last three years. The following is an abstract:—

Ministry of Finances.—1. "Reports on Trade and External Navigation for 1859-60-61."

2. "Annual Budgets of Expenses and Receipts, with detailed Reports upon Financial Administration."

Ministry of Justice.—1. "Statistics of Criminal and Civil Justice."

2. "Prison Statistics."

3. "Police Statistics."

Ministry of Colonies.—1. "Reports upon the Condition and Administration of the Colonies, 1858-59-60."

2. "An Annual Report upon Trade and External Navigation" appears at Java and Madura, the last for 1861; and upon "Education," the last for 1860.

Ministry of the Interior.—1. "Statistical Annual" (*Statistisch Jaarboek*), tenth and eleventh years, in one volume, containing population statistics for 1859 and 1860, and an abstract of the last decennial census of 31st December, 1859.

2. "Statistics of Education: Higher, Middle, and Primary."

3. "Reports upon Beneficent Institutions." It appears that annual reports upon education and upon beneficent institutions have been published from 1816.

* *Aperçu des Travaux Statistiques dans le Royaume des Pays Bas.* Report to the Berlin Meeting of the International Statistical Congress, September, 1863.

4. "Reports upon Lunatic Asylums." Annual reports have appeared from 1844.

5. "Agricultural Statistics for 1859 and 1860." Published annually from 1851.

6. "Statistics of Sea Fisheries for 1859-60-61." Published annually from 1854.

7. "Reports upon Public Works for 1859-60-61." Published annually from 1853.

8. "Reports upon Electric Telegraphs for 1859-60." Published from 1853.

Each of the eleven provinces of the Netherlands has its statistical office, which presents an annual report to the provincial council. The provinces have published their reports separately since 1840.

A commission for the statistical description of the province of Groningen was instituted in 1854, having for its president the royal commissioner Van Royén, and for its secretary, Dr. L. Ali Cohen. The commission possesses a library and archives, and divides its labours into four sections: (1) geographical and topographical description; (2) population and cognate subjects; (3) social institutions; (4) industry and wealth. Two volumes of transactions have already been published, and the third is in progress, under the title of "Documents upon the Present Condition of the Province of Groningen." They are said to contain very interesting information.

Dr. von Baumhauer has recently calculated for the Dutch Government two tables of mortality, arranged in the usual form of numbers living and dying, equation of life, and expectation of life. Each of the two periods, he observes, for which these tables have been constructed, viz., the duo-decennial (1840-51), and the decennial (1840-51), has had its favourable and its disastrous years. Amongst the former, he reckons the quinquennial periods, 1840-45 and 1850-54, particularly the two years 1850-51; amongst the latter, 1846 and 1847, years of scarcity; 1848, and especially 1849, ravages of Asiatic cholera; 1855, great mortality in childhood from measles, and in adult age from catarrhal fever, typhus, and cholera; 1857, especially great mortality amongst children; 1858 and 1859 particularly, small pox, malignant fevers; and 1859, cholera again.

The results given in the following table are an abstract of the results as regards average expectation of life; to which we have added corresponding results for England and Sweden. It will be seen that the mortality in the Netherlands compares unfavourably with that experienced in England and Sweden. It may be that some of the greatest triumphs of sanitary improvement in diminishing the death-rate, are still reserved to stimulate the endeavours of statesmen and philanthropists in a country like the Netherlands, where

stern battles against natural disadvantages have been the rule instead of the exception.

Whilst these remarks are assumed to be applicable to the mass of the community, the general population, there is reason to believe that in its select classes, such for instance as annuitants and members of provident institutions, the average expectation of life and longevity, is not materially different from that experienced by the like classes in other countries. Modern statistics of the mortality of what is technically called "select life," as observed in the Netherlands, would be a desirable addition to the stock of knowledge on these matters. The old observations upon the lives of annuitants and tontine nominees, investigated by de Witt and Kersseboom, showed the value of life in Holland to be quite equal to the corresponding value afterwards ascertained in France and England as prevailing in like classes.

Age.	Netherlands.				Sweden.		England.*	
	Average Expectation of Life.				Average Expectation of Life.		Average Expectation of Life.	
	Males.		Females.		1841-55.		1841.	1857.
	1840-51.	1850-59.	1840-51.	1850-59.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
0 ...	33·83	34·12	36·63	36·43	41·28	45·60	40·36	42·04
1 ...	43·46	45·67	44·92	45·27	48·29	51·95	46·95	47·36
2 ...	46·30	47·54	47·82	48·12	49·27	52·92	49·20	49·38
3 ...	47·57	48·59	49·12	49·16	49·68	53·26	50·03	50·25
4 ...	47·83	48·82	49·41	49·39	49·68	53·22	50·28	50·56
5	47·96	48·68	49·24	49·23	49·40	52·96	50·21	50·53
10	44·88	45·91	46·56	46·51	46·48	49·99	47·47	47·86
20	37·36	38·26	39·21	39·17	38·55	42·12	39·99	40·65
30	31·21	31·75	32·48	32·40	31·22	34·45	33·21	34·06
40	24·56	24·96	26·27	26·36	24·33	27·21	26·46	27·50
50	18·48	18·46	19·84	19·73	18·02	20·11	19·87	20·84
60	12·64	12·78	13·44	13·31	12·31	13·48	13·60	14·49
70	7·72	7·91	8·07	8·07	7·40	8·04	8·55	9·12
80	4·52	4·36	4·64	4·47	3·88	4·32	4·97	5·34
90 ...	2·68	2·36	2·81	2·67	2·42	2·76	2·80	3·09
95	2·40	2·51	2·67	2·62	2·00	2·58	2·11	2·38
100	1·00	1·00	1·00	1·00	—	1·00	—	1·86

* From Dr. Farr's life tables; the male lives published in the twelfth, and the female lives in the twentieth "Annual Report of the Registrar-General."